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SOME FAMILY LETTERS
OF
W. M. THACKERAY

W. M. Thackeray

From a sketch by Richard Doyle in the British Museum

SOME FAMILY LETTERS

OF

W. M. THACKERAY

TOGETHER WITH

RECOLLECTIONS

BY HIS KINSWOMAN

BLANCHE WARRE CORNISH

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
MDCCCCXI

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CONTENTS

I. Thackeray and his Father's Family . 1

II. Two First Cousins of Thackeray's . 43

III. Thackeray at Palace Green . . 53

IV. Last Months 67

I

THACKERAY AND HIS FATHER'S FAMILY

THACKERAY AND HIS FATHER'S FAMILY

THE present writer cannot have been very old when she first remembers Mr. Thackeray in Paris, because when he offered her his arm on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, and said they would be taken for husband and wife, she felt sorry that French people should see such a tall, stately Englishman mated to such an insignificant little wife. Her hand went straight up from the shoulder to rest upon his arm, aunts were left behind, the green Boulevard trees stretched before, the stroll seemed long with gay vistas. It cannot, however, have extended far, for there was a halt before the windows of the famous *confiseur*, Boissier, on the next Boulevard — named des Capucines. Boissier's boxes lay on a line with her eyes, and in the boxes were the bonbons in patterns.

"Don't you wish for that lovely blue box full of chocolates?"

"Oh yes!"

I recall my confusion still when Mr. Thackeray dived into the shop, paid many francs, and ordered the large box to be sent home, as the result of my indiscreet exclamation.

After this, adoration passed all bounds. There is a straight-backed armchair of the Louis Philippe period in my possession, with cushioned arms on which I used to perch beside my grandmother, Mrs. Ritchie, who was the great novelist's aunt. In that "Grandmother's chair" now sat Mr. Thackeray, very fresh, very wise-looking behind his spectacles, very attractive with his thick curling hair and rosy cheeks. There was an element of mystery about him fascinating even to childhood. He always seemed alone. He had just been in America. He was on his way to Rome. He was meteoric. He was exceedingly sad and silent. He was won-

drously droll. Above all, he was kind, so that the child perched beside him questioned him: —

"Is you good?" (from the perch).

"Not so good as I should like to be" (from Mr. Thackeray).

"Is you clever?"

"Well, I've written a book or two. Perhaps I am rather clever."

"Is you pretty?"

"Oh, no, no, no! *No! No! No!*" (I recall Mr. Thackeray bursting out laughing.)

"I think you 's good, and you 's clever, and you 's pretty."

Thackeray and childhood are linked wherever "The Rose and the Ring" is read in English nurseries and schoolrooms. It was to be drawn and written in Rome for Edith Story (Countess Peruzzi) the following New Year. At the time of which I write pictures were drawn for us Indian children in Paris. The occult Morale of Fairy Black-

stick was somehow impersonated by Mr. Thackeray in these pencil sketches, though to be sure he dealt poetic justice with his pencil only in humorous moral to small heroines in well-appointed nurseries. In one of these faded sketches he appears above the steam of the evening tub looking gravely through his spectacles across a column of vapour to repress an uproar. In a pen-and-ink sketch of that time in my possession, a radiant little girl, who is a foretaste of Betsinda, and a lank-haired child in a shawl inhabit one slum. But she with the curls had secured a basket and a parasol. And she rides in the basket like any Park beauty, and holds her parasol aslant and knows her own dignity. And the other is the more wretched, and *she* carries a thin baby and a jug to the public-house. And in this study of temperaments we feel that when the child with the shawl is a grown woman she never *will* keep her eyes from envying a rival's happiness.

The moral conflict of everyday life,

whether of rich or poor, of man or child, was never far from Thackeray's thoughts. And he ever seemed to remember not to judge lest we be judged. Once, on a later visit to Paris, naughtiness in the schoolroom, bewildering element to the culprit, was punished. A "German tree" party was prohibited at Christmas-time. Mr. Thackeray called and was *told*. A kind aunt, conscious of over-severity, meant him to beg the prisoner off. But there was awful silence from the straight-backed chair. The world seemed to be coming to an end; the silence was felt by aunt and niece. Grave Mr. Thackeray did not ask for another chance. But something was said about the necessity for discipline, and he spoke without a smile:

"I know some folks who were naughty when they were young and are good now."

Did he mean himself? Something in his manner suggested it and the disgrace seemed a bit lifted. But when the accused went to the party — for the informing of

Mr. Thackeray had apparently been considered a sufficient shock — the sting remained, he had *not* interfered.

His deliberation was awful. One day the cat of the household seemed to come in for his psychology. She leapt on to the deserted breakfast-table and stole a bit of fish. Thackeray stood alone in the room (except for the child). He watched the cat's movements contemplatively and then exclaimed with tragic intensity: —

"Que voulez-vous? C'est plus fort qu'elle!"

In that Paris home of my grandmother of which the letters that follow are the bequest, many literary souvenirs were gathered. But intimate things represent Thackeray better than "gold-dust swept from the salons," — Elizabeth Barrett Browning's description of his conversation in Rome. In the following trait the home detail must appear. "The Newcomes" was finished in our house. My aunts left two white-capped maids for the

service of Mr. Thackeray and his daughters in the sunny apartment through September. And there he described the old cook, Annette, "coming into the salon one day to find me blubbering in a corner. I was writing the last page of 'Newcome.' The death of Colonel Newcome could not have been written without tears, any more than the parting of Hector and Andromache. But as for Annette, the witness of a novelist's emotion, she kept her comments on *auteurs anglais* in the classic days of the *appartement* for the subject of their gigantic tallness. 'Monsieur Thackeray était très grand et de belle carrure,' but his friend, 'Monsieur Higgins (Jacob Omnium), était *encore* plus grand! C'étaient des géants et de beaux hommes pourtant.'"[1]

[1] Thackeray is the only Englishman of letters who had and retains a popular name with the Parisians at large. The restaurant where his portrait in oils, as a young man, is preserved in a small panelled dining-room is Thérion's, Boulevard Saint-Germain (Rive Gauche). Outside the restaurant hangs a sign. It represents the *present* Thérion in the company of the novelist.

The following letter was written at my grandmother's death to her eldest daughter Charlotte. Mrs. Ritchie was the youngest daughter of William Makepeace Thackeray, of Hadley, Herts; he is buried beside the old church there. She was the favourite sister of Richmond Thackeray, the novelist's father. She has often been described.[1] Her eldest son William, mentioned in the letter, was the pride and glory of her last years; my father was Advocate-General with a great practice at the Calcutta bar at the age of thirty-eight. We, his children, had been sent home to her care. And as his success crowned all her hopes, so too the fame of her loved brother Richmond's son was her joy. Mr. Ritchie, my grandfather, who died in 1848, had shared her trust in the young William

[1] In Biographical Introduction to *Ballads*, etc.; in Mr. Walter Sichel's *Sheridan* (she knew the wit in her uncle Mr. Peter Moore's house in Westminster as a girl); in Sir William Hunter's *Thackerays in India* as one of the band of high-spirited brothers and sisters brought up at Hadley Green and afterwards distinguished.

Makepeace when he chose literature for his profession and came and went in their house at Paris like the *Zeitgeist* of the thirties.

ROME, FEB. 6, 1854.

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE, — We have just received your letter, and I feel now more even than at our departure that we ought not to have come away and should have stayed with you. The comfort and companionship might not have been much, but would have helped some little. We shall be in Paris soon after this letter: for the girls agreed that they could not bear to take tours of pleasure, and think of you and dear Jane alone in your affliction. We set off by a steamer on the 9th and in a week more please God shall come and shake you by the hand. What you will do then, of what help we can be to you, we will be able to devise. Who can be of help in this grief? God forbid you should not feel it, and I sympathise in it — who recollect my dearest Aunt's

sweet face when I came to her a child from India; for six and thirty years up to yesterday almost always sweet and kind and tender. O the pure loving heart! Does it not make yours thrill with thanks and devout gratitude to God our Father, to think that hers was so guileless and gentle, so full of dear kindness to all human creatures, as well as to her children and to me who am almost one of them. As we love and bless them when they are gone: surely we may hope that their love too for us still endures in yonder awful Future into which the Divine Goodness has called them. I sit at the paper and don't know what to write. I pray God to amend my life and purify it against the day when I shall be called to go whither my dearest Aunt has preceded us. Can't you imagine her reunion with those she continued to love after their departure with such a beautiful fidelity — the beloved father, husband, children who have gone before? My dear old William whose children you

watch over so fondly will bless and love his sisters for their care of them and his mother. You will keep your hearts up for those innocent little girls. Dearest Charlotte and Jane, I know no one can tell you how to do *your* duty. I am sure you will be cheerful and thank God humbly for my dear dear Aunt's affectionate remembrance. The post is going away — and indeed I have n't a word more to say dear Sisters but that I am yours most sincerely and gratefully and affectionately always.

W. M. T.

After her mother's death, Charlotte Ritchie carried on the hospitality of the Paris home; she led the life of a Sister of Charity until 1879, the date of her death at 12, Rue Lavoisier. In her drawing-room hung a large oil portrait of the ancestral William Makepeace Thackeray,[1] her grand-

[1] The youthful "Elephant Hunter" of *The Thackerays in India.*

father and the novelist's. The following letter gives me a pang. Why should Titmarsh have been called upon to give up the picture of his grandfather? He seems to have been asked to do so in the name of spring and youth and affection. How soft-hearted authors used to be! The date is that of "Vanity Fair"!

YOUNG STREET,
(post mark) 1849.

MY DEAR AUNT, — Of course I cede my picture to you with a very great deal of pleasure. I recollect it quite well as a child in India and admiring above all things how the stick was painted which was made to look as if it was polished and shone. What strange things the memory chooses to keep hold of! Your reminiscences are of a very different nature about the picture: it brings back spring and youth to you and all the affectionate histories connected with it; it can only be an ancestor to me. . . . I think that Southampton Row was the only part of my

youth that was decently cheerful; all the rest strikes me to have been glum as an English Sunday.

Goodbye dear Aunt

I am always affectionately yours and my Cousins'

W. M. T.

Addressed to Mrs. Ritchie,
9, Rue Montaigne, Paris.

We must go back to the youthful career of W. M. T. with the next letter, the first to my father in my collection. William Ritchie was just going up to Trinity College, Cambridge. Thackeray was twenty-four. The letter contained his first announcement, if not of turning author, at least of commencing a book. His authorship before this date consisted of a few contributions to a luckless paper of which he became proprietor, and possibly, not certainly, he had sent something to "Fraser" before this date. But the projected Traveller's book was to be post-

poned this year by his engagement to Miss Shawe and the following by his marriage with her. It was, however, to be written and published as "Cornhill to Cairo" in 1845. Thackeray seldom penned a scheme in the air: deed always followed the word.

PARIS, SEPT., 1835.

MY DEAR WILLIAM, — The thing is impossible — I am tied to my Mama's tail, and must maintain myself in this position for some weeks longer. We are going I believe to Strasburg, whence it is my intent to voyage viâ Munich to across the Tyrol into Ittaly[*sic*]. Besides this I am arrived at such a pitch of sentimentality (for a girl without a penny in the world) that my whole seyn, être, or being, is bouleversé or capsized — I sleep not neither do I eat, only smoke a little and build castles in the clouds; thinking all day of the propriety of a sixième, boiled beef and soup for dinner, and the possession of the gal of my art. This must account for

my neglect of Jane,[1] which has been shameful, the fact is that I have been so busy of evenings uttering the tenderest sentiments in the most appropriate language, that I have never had the heart to disturb her among her virgin companions — God knows how it will end, I will, if I can, bolt before I have committed myself for better for worser. But I don't think that I shall have the power. My mama has given me a five franc piece to amuse myself with, and stop away for a day, but like the foolish fascinated moth I flickers round the candle of my love.

I suppose you go up in October — I would write you some very delightful moral sentiments on the occasion only you see I am in such a state of mental exhaustion that it is impossible to form connected sentences, much more to pour into your astonished ear the sound of sonorous moralities which are

[1] Jane Ritchie was then a pupil at a rather famous school, kept by Madame Martinez, connected with the banished court of Charles X.

likely to have an influence on your heart — only, my dear fellow, in the name of the Saints, of your mother, of your amiable family, and the unfortunate cousin who writes this — keep yrself out of DEBT — and to do this you must avoid the dinner parties and the rowing (boating) men — however, you will see John Kemble who (particularly when he is drunk) will give you the finest advice on these and other moral and religious points.

I look forward with a good deal of pleasure to my trip. I am sure it would do you much more good to come with me, than you can get from all the universities in Christendom. I purpose going from Munich to Venice by what I hear is the most magnificent road in the world — then from Venice if I can effect the thing, I will pass over for a week or so into Turkey, just to be able to say in a book that I have been there — after which I will go to Rome, Naples, Florence, and if possible pay a visit to dear Mrs.

Langslow, who considering all things will I am sure be charmed to see me — then I will go to England book in hand, I will get three hundred guineas for my book — then I will exhibit at the Water Colour Society, and sell my ten drawings forthwith, then I will mar . . .

You recollect the picture of Jeannette and her *pot-au-lait* on the Boulevards, as likewise the milk pail of Alnaschar in the A. Nights, if you don't, Tony will tell you. Give my love to him, and aunt and everybody. I am going to write to Frank[1] (for whom I have bought a plan of the battle of Wynendael) so I need not impart to you any of the affectionate remarks, which I intend making to him. God bless you my dear William, I will write to you sometimes on

[1] The Reverend F. Thackeray, Rector of Broxbourne, Herts, author of the *Life of Chatham* and father of the Reverend F. St. John Thackeray. This uncle, great in genealogy, may interest lovers of *Esmond*, for he drew W. M. T.'s attention in youth to the command of Marshal Webb, his ancestor, at the battle of Wynendael.

my travels, and when I am settled my wife will always be happy to see you at tea.

Your loving Cousin,

W. M. THACKERAY.

Thackeray's marriage took place in the following August, 1836. The same autumn he brought "the diminutive part of me," — as he wrote accepting his aunt's — Mrs. Ritchie's — invitation to stay with her and her husband at their country-house at "les Thermes," now a part of Paris. Mrs. Thackeray's carefully trained voice and charm in singing was long remembered by all who heard her at "les Thermes" or in Paris, where the young couple lived through a winter in the Rue Saint-Augustin.

And then their home was in Great Coram Street, London, and there are pretty descriptions of their eldest-born written by the young father and mother to "Aunt Ritchie." The little two-months-old Annie had "a smile of the greatest sweetness";

at six months she seemed to understand her parents and to attempt to express her sympathy. The letters of the next year on family affairs are seldom without Thackerayana. But for the sake of wife and two children he was full of the necessity of regarding authorship as business. "Punch" was started, and the wonder is that he found time for the exquisitely penned and neatly folded family notes of that time. In the year which dates the following letter, "Vanity Fair" was begun. It was but an *ébauche* without a name. But do not the forms vignetted in the following jottings from Marienburg seem to beckon us forwards into "Vanity Fair"?

MARIENBURG, BOPPART-ON-THE-RHINE,
19TH AUGUST, 1841.

MY DEAR AUNT,— You will see by this address to what an out of the way place we have come. It is, however, one of the most beautiful places in the world, a fine air, and

a kind of genteel hospital set up for the cure of almost all complaints by means of sweating and cold water. Gouts and rheumatisms and other inflammatory ills go off here as if by magic. People begin at four o'clock in the morning to be wrapped up in blankets where they lie and melt for four hours, then come shower baths, plunging baths, hip baths, all sorts of water taken within and without, and at the end of a certain number of months: they rise up and walk. . . . My mother is here whose presence is the greatest possible comfort to me, and with her for a short time are my cousin with her husband Charles Smyth. They are two of the noblest people God ever made. . . . The Bedingfield family's arrival—delicious rencontre! You should have seen Miss Turner skipping into the salon and as it were dancing to the music performed there. Time has not thinned poor Mrs. Bedingfield's hair in the least, and has given her son a pair of whiskers which protrude from his chin. . . .

Mrs. Jaffray, whom we met at Frankfort on a short pleasure excursion which did us both good — and who meeting me in the street with a cigar, gracefully took the cigar I was smoking out of my hand, and flung it in the gutter — Mrs. Jaffray told me you were spending the summer at Boulogne. I was at one time thinking of wintering in the very same place: but my dear mother has not seen the children for a long time and her heart yearns for them, and so we shall face the winter at Paris. . . .

Mrs. Jaffray is surely related to Miss Crawley, whose objections to Mr. James Crawley's smoking at Brighton might seem to our emancipated age an exaggerated picture of manners! Miss Crawley was a charming woman in "Vanity Fair." So was Mrs. Jaffray, the mother of handsome Arthur Jaffray, Thackeray and my father's contemporary and friend, who constantly welcomed them in Eaton Square.

The qualities of his own children and those of his friends are often given in traits described in Mr. Thackeray's letters. There is a description of a little boy of two whose character we may guess at in after life. Mr. Thackeray was often the guest of Mr. Russell Sturgis, at whose house London and Boston celebrities rubbed wits in their prime. Mrs. Russell Sturgis, always a chosen friend and adviser of Thackeray in his loneliness, often received his little daughters, and one day they were gathered about the Christmas tree at the country home at Walton with Julian May and Howard Sturgis. "A little boy of two," wrote Thackeray to his mother, "would have won your heart in his rapture at the sight of his first Xmas tree. When the doors were opened and the tree stood up with all its lights and glories he flew into the room and danced round the room with a chant of joy—'Oh the Kissamussa tree!' again and again repeated. And when his turn came to receive toys he begged that

they might remain on the tree not to diminish its splendour."

And here is a vignette portrait from a letter which follows and in the same way reveals a temperament easily recognizable in the grown woman, as we recognize it also in the grown man once depicted in infancy. It is that of a little girl who will not remind her father that it is her birthday. The letter is written to my aunt, Miss Ritchie, in Paris, when Thackeray's children were under the care of his mother, Mrs. Carmichael Smyth. Their home was to be for some years with him, separated as they were from their mother by her lifelong illness.

88 St. James's Street, Wednesday.

I have just left the young ladies putting on smart frocks to go out to dinner with my fellow traveller Emerson Tennent and his family. This is Anny's birthday. Her father did n't remember it: and poor Nanny would n't say a word, but kept her secret,

until my Mother remembered it. We have been engaged in a round of pleasures. They come and breakfast with me in the mornings and we went to the Colosseum and the Zoölogical; the Chinese Exhibition and the Tower were the points of attraction yesterday, and the evening passed off with a splendid festival at Captain Becher's. The evening ended as usual: both children fell asleep in the carriage, and were borne up like a pair of bundles to the bedroom.

To-day is the last of the fête. At twelve o'clock one of the most splendid one-horse flys London can produce is to waft us to Richmond, where we shall see the deer in the park, and have a syllabub for tea, no doubt. And then comes to-morrow and the dear little souls and the kind mother disappear in the distance — and I am left to my bachelor life again. If I did not know how much better a guardian they have in her than myself, they never should leave me, and it would be much better for me too.

To his mother Thackeray wrote many letters in this same vein of regret during those strenuous years when club-life was the only substitute possible for home.

The following letter seems to have been written immediately after the visit described above: —

St. James's Street, 1844.

My dearest Mammy, — Your letter of Saturday arrived here on Wednesday morning — does n't it seem impudent to say I have had no time to answer it till now? — but somehow the day has passed and the postman's bell stopped ringing and it was n't done. What a picture you give of the place — Paris! I wish September were come. I will come then, please God, for ten days, but shan't be able to move until then except from Saturday till Tuesday — how well that would have done for Dieppe and back; but it can't be helped. I wish you had never come, that 's the truth — for I fancied myself perfectly happy until then — now I see the difference:

and what a deal of the best sort of happiness it is God's will that I should lose. Whitebait dinners are all very well, but — hang the buts — it is those we are always sighing after. Well, let us both be thankful that those eels have such an admirable brown sauce and that the champagne is iced to a nicety: a man can't have everything. There is no fun in writing this, though — the paper gets dim before my eyes and it is the scene of parting over again. Don't fancy that I'm unhappy, though; it 's only the abstract pathos of the thing that moves me. I never could bear to think of children parted from their parents somehow without a tendency to blubbering; and am as weak to this day upon the point, as I used to be at School. In the meanwhile it will be a consolation to you to know this tender-hearted being is cruelly hungry, and in twenty minutes from this time will be on his way to a jollification. God bless all.

W. M. T.

From 1842 to 1846 Mr. Thackeray had no settled home. But in that year he brought his two little daughters to live with him at 13 Young Street, Kensington, and they were never parted again. We may read his souvenir of his married home in his prose and verse, and in the ballad of the Bouillabaisse:

> Ah me! how quick the days are flitting!
> I mind me of a time that 's gone,
> When here I 'd sit, as now I 'm sitting,
> In this same place — but not alone.

In Young Street, "Vanity Fair" was published in book form at the close of 1847, and brought Thackeray fame and ease; in this house "Pendennis" was finished in 1848. But the little daughters were not yet grown up and popularity and intimate friendships never compensated for his home-loneliness of more than ten years. True there is constant mention in his family notes from Young Street of his eldest daughter, Annie. These notes are addressed to my aunt; they are exquisitely penned and folded and begin,

"My dear Women," or "Mes bonnes cousines," and contain family details, and invariably tell of Annie's power of motherliness to her young sister, Minny,[1] or promise of companionship to himself. But it was not until that winter in Rome, alluded to above, that both daughters became the perfect companions which they were always to remain. Their social gifts were discovered with delight by his friends in Rome. Elizabeth Barrett Browning gave them of her best; and Mrs. Sartoris introduced them to the world of song and art. Their own genuineness was their best inspiration with Thackeray. It may be said that from 1855 onwards the daughters' converse with their father was one of the happiest friendships ever known.

To return to the family letters, Thackeray and my father had never ceased to be linked, though my father was four years junior. William Ritchie ("His Honour," as Thackeray named him when he became

[1] Harriet Marian, afterwards Mrs. Leslie Stephen.

Legal Member of Council, and first remembered by Thackeray as the "Gentleman of the Long Robe" in the nursery) was an Oppidan at Eton from 1829 to 1835 in Holt's House and M. Dupuis's pupil-room. He had gone up to Cambridge before the traditions of the famous Fitzgerald Thackeray set had passed away, and was linked with it by Tom Taylor, who has described the incident which may have given my father the name alluded to below. From Trinity my father had passed to the Chambers in Farrer's Building, Inner Temple, of Mr. Hugh Hill (known afterwards as Mr. Justice Hugh Hill), a special pleader of great cunning, and read law with J. C. Templar, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Cranbrook, and Henry Erskine. William Ritchie was called to the bar in 1841, and then fell in love at the same age as Thackeray and determined his career thereby. He relinquished friends and promise of success at the English Bar. He was married

at St. John's Church, Calcutta, January, 1846.

The following letter, chosen among several, alludes to my mother's, Miss Trimmer's, voyage out to India before her marriage: —

LATE AUTUMN, 1845.

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE: — I've only time as usual for a line and as usual too to thank you for all your kindness.

So Augusta has sailed to her Villiam. Happy rogue! Everybody who comes from Calcutta brings the best accounts of him and his popularity and his talents and his prosperity. The old Cambridge men I meet continually ask "how is Gentleman Ritchie?" I hope he'll be as rich as Follett, though I'm sure he'll never be so stingy. Poor Mr. Langslow comes to me of a morning and talks of his own case and the Baron de Bode. The Hallidays I see from time to time, very gay and jolly and kind. I've not

been able to see them much of late, though, on account of the business in the morning and the engagements at nights. But the season's over now, thank God; and I shall get a little quiet and leisure. I have been bothering my brains for a fortnight over a chapter about Jerusalem, which contains some unorthodox remarks; but my dear old mother has written me a letter so full of terror and expostulation, and dread of future consequences for my awful heresy that I have to cancel it and begin afresh. Good-bye, dear Charlotte. What a comfort you and yours have been to me! That's what I think, every day.

Your affectionate,

W. M. T.

At the close of 1854 my father became Advocate-General at the Calcutta Bar, at the age of thirty-eight. He enjoyed the best of health through his busiest years in India, but Thackeray's serious turn in Rome

had made him liable to recurring attacks of pain which left him highly nervous in convalescence before restoration to his usual work and high spirits. The following letter was written in such a convalescence, when William Ritchie was at home for a year's holiday: —

36 Onslow Square, May 25th, 1855.

My dear William, — 1000 pardons. Your letter came when I was ill abed; then I got up and went to the Derby, which made me ill again for yesterday — and when ill penwriting makes me so much worser that I avoid all I can of it. The girls and I will make you and A—— (to whom in this familiar manner I send my love) as comfortable as we can. Your quarters will be awfully narrow, but with a contented mind, why should you not bear them for a brief space? There will be let offs not only on the 31st of May, but on the ensuing day. We find it cheaper to give double-

barrelled dinner parties, though deucedly unpleasant to give one or two. The house is turned upside down, frantic knife-cleaning goes on, sham footmen prowl about the premises — I wish we might do it at an hotel. My rest is destroyed and my mind troubled with fear and fluster a week off. As soon as I have written this little note (and about 18 more) I am going to take a portmanteau into the country somewhere, and stay away for three or four days and recruit. I asked William Sterling to meet you, but my dinners ain't good enough for him or he is going out of town. But you will see a few small lions, and I hope we shall get on.

At the Derby I was next carriage to Mowbray Morris,[1] who looked very languid and handsome drinking champagne and eating venison pie as he lay back in his barouche. I believe it was a very good race. I lost my money, though — sixpence

[1] Editor of the *Times* with Mr. Delane from 1860.

to Sir Edwin Landseer, who backed the favorite against the field.

What frivolity is this I write! Sir, I am not thinking of this, but of those 18 other letters which I have to produce before I go countrywards. In London there's no affection, no leisure, no relationship — nothing but fierce business and then fierce pleasure, and then a spell of illness during which one has leisure to think a little. I declare I have quite enjoyed 2 or 3 days this past week which kept me in bed. . . . Well, it will be pleasant to see a great Colony of Ritchies in the sunshine by the sea-shore. And O how I wish those 2 dinner parties were over, don't you?

I send my love to all, and am always my dear old William's

Affectionate,

W. M. T.

P.S. He proceeds with the next letter, "Sir, in answer to your proposal from the

Hull Royal Literary Society I regret, etc., etc."

When the spell of illness was over, nerves were overcome by splendid spirits, and in the next year there is actually a suggestion of coming out to India.

3 Randolph Crescent, Edinburgh,
Nov. 24th, 1856.

My dear Villikins, — Read over the enclosed respectful document and think in your noble mind whether it is likely to serve my friend Captain Blackwood, by being sent to its address or put in the fire — that is if you have fires at Calcutta — though of course you do to burn your widows on. Blackwood is a friend of mine, a good officer, a most worthy gentleman, and I am very anxious to serve him — Can you?

My friend Davison goes to Madras — and now I really think I must come to my native country. Yardley at Bombay, Davus

at Madras, and you and Arthur Buller at Calcutta — what a jolly Winter I and the girls might have! Let us finish the "forthcoming serial" and then see.

I saw your dear little ones at Paris not very long ago — Charlotte and Jane (how surprised we were to find her back!) will tell you how my Mamma fell ill and my girls were disappointed of their trip to Scotland. My orations is a great success here, and I am coining money at present at the rate of about half an Advocate-General, say 5 or £600 a month. I get £600 for my next book. Cock a doodle doo! The family is looking up is n't it? I send my best love to A. and am

Yours, my dear old William, always,

W. M. T.

Before my father, William Ritchie, left England we were all gathered in an Isle of Wight home, with our beloved cousins. The two Williams tower up in my memory in

the family circle; and it was then we little Parisians had our first glimpse of London, from Mr. Thackeray's hospitable London house. How vividly I recall a summer's evening in Onslow Square, with the French windows wide open to the balcony, and an early dinner, at which Mr. Thackeray and his young daughters entertained Mr. Maskelyne Scott, and my sister and I wore flowers in our hair and were called Spanish ladies by the guest! Those Early Victorian times seem very spoiling to young people as I look back upon them, but the *école sentimentale* was counteracted by a school of manners which I fancy was more prominent at that day amongst the young than in our time. This education lay in the social humours of "Punch," of which my souvenirs are redolent. There is no John Leech to-day to draw the absurdities of the rising generation. Leech's Juvenilia are for ever associated with the volumes of "Punch" in Mr. Thackeray's library. We used to draw them out

of the orderly shelves and read them in the shade of Onslow Square. We identified him and his friends with "Punch." Thackeray had retired from it the year before, but the classic figure of Mr. Punch stood on his writing-table in solid silver, the gift of "Punch's" Edinburgh readers, and the silver Punch contained ink and we looked on that ink as charmed. And our profound studies in "Punch" acquainted us with another friend of Mr. Thackeray, who has also been a friend to the youths of England, Richard Doyle, though he too had resigned his post on the staff for the sake of his religion. His illustrations of Mr. Thackeray's Rebecca Rowena, alas! put us off from Scott, and I have no defence of parody in the general plea for humour in the schoolroom and in the first peep into life.

After that one glimpse into the busy and fascinating life of Onslow Square, we returned to the Isle of Wight, but afterwards there was an exchange of houses between

Mr. Thackeray and my father; we spent some time in Onslow Square whilst Mr. Thackeray finished "The Newcomes" at 36, Rue Codot de Mauvoi.

II

TWO FIRST COUSINS OF THACKERAY'S

TWO FIRST COUSINS OF THACKERAY'S

THE memories of a girlhood may possibly be even of less value than the rigmarole of childhood, but as they merge into girlhood mine are more and more serious, concerned as they are with the records of noble lives of first cousins of W. M. Thackeray, which were to be cut short and yet to be held up to the world as full of achievement. Sir Richmond Shakespear, like my father, William Ritchie, was Thackeray's first cousin. Each was successful in his career; both were filled with the spirit of high endeavour; and in death they were not long divided. Must the narrative be sombre because they were to die in the splendour of their meridian? Not necessarily, where religious faith was deeply rooted in both, and where the exuberant humour inspired by

Thackeray was in a measure shared by my father.

Sir Richmond Shakespear[1] first appears in the family chronicle in theatricals with Thackeray when they were both home for the holidays at Charterhouse in Mrs. Ritchie's house in Southampton Row.

"William Thackeray often came to Aunt Ritchie's. He was full of humour and cleverness, as you may suppose, and used to draw caricatures for us. He used also to act with us sometimes, and I remember him in a wig capitally got up as Dr. Pangloss. My brother George and I were at Charterhouse in the same boarding-house as Thackeray."

In 1829 Shakespear went out from Addiscombe to India in the Royal Artillery. In 1841 he was knighted on Lord Palmerston's recommendation, at the age of twenty-nine. This was after the following achievement by Shakespear. The Khivan Turkomans were at war with Russia; 416

[1] See *Dictionary of National Biography.*

Russian prisoners were at the mercy of the Sultan of Khiva. The task of their deliverance and conveyance to St. Petersburg fell to Lieutenant Shakespear as senior subaltern of Abbott's Battery of Royal Artillery. Lieutenant Shakespear commanded the battery on a successful mission to Khiva. A letter from a Russian officer describes "the Englishman Shakespear's march to St. Petersburg with the prisoners." In 1842 the Afghanistan Campaign gave him another opportunity of distinction, the rescue of English prisoners in great danger from the Amir. In 1844 he married Sophy, sister of Sir Rivers Thompson.

The chronicle of Sir R. Shakespear's achievement is briefly given from Mr. Thackeray's own pen in the "Cornhill Magazine" for December, 1861, in the "Roundabout Paper" on Letts's Diary: —

"And now, brethren, may I conclude this discourse with an extract out of that great diary, the newspaper? I read it but yester-

day, and it has mingled with all my thoughts since then. Here are the two paragraphs which appeared following each other: —

"'Mr. R[itchie], the Advocate-General of Calcutta, has been appointed to the post of Legislative Member of the Council of the Governor-General.'

"'Sir R[ichmond] S[hakespear], Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, died on the 29th of October, of bronchitis.'

"These two men, whose different fates are recorded in two paragraphs and half a dozen lines of the same newspaper, were sisters' sons. In one of the stories by the present writer, a man is described tottering 'up the steps of the ghaut,' having just parted with his child, whom he is despatching to England from India. I wrote this, remembering in long, long distant days, such a ghaut, or river-stair, at Calcutta; and a day when, down those steps, to a boat which was waiting, came two children, whose mothers remained on the shore. One of

those ladies was never to see her boy more; and he, too, is just dead in India, 'of bronchitis, on the 29th of October.' We were first cousins; had been little playmates and friends from the time of our birth; and the first house in London to which I was taken was that of our aunt, the mother of his Honour the Member of Council. His Honour was even then a gentleman of the long robe, being, in truth, a baby in arms. We Indian children were consigned to a School of which our deluded parents had heard a favourable report, but which was governed by a horrible little tyrant, who made our young lives so miserable that I remember kneeling by my little bed of a night, and saying, 'Pray God, I may dream of my mother!' Thence we went to a public school, and my cousin to Addiscombe and to India.

"'For thirty-two years,' the paper says, 'Sir Richmond Shakespear faithfully and devotedly served the Government of India, and during that period but once visited

England, for a few months and on public duty. . . .'

"When he came to London the cousins and playfellows of early Indian days met once again, and shook hands. 'Can I do anything for you?' I remember the kind fellow asking. He was always asking that question of all kinsmen; of all widows and orphans; of all the poor; of young men who might need his purse or his service. I saw a young officer yesterday to whom the first words Sir Richmond Shakespear wrote on his arrival in India were, 'Can I do anything for you?' His purse was at the command of all. His kind hand was always open. It was a gracious fate which sent him to rescue widows and captives. Where could they have had a champion more chivalrous, a protector more loving and tender?

"I write down his name in my little book, among those of others dearly loved, who, too, have been summoned hence. And so we meet and part; we struggle and succeed; or we fail

and drop unknown on the way. As we leave the fond mother's knee, the rough trials of childhood and boyhood begin; and then manhood is upon us, and the battle of life, with its chances, perils, wounds, defeats, distinctions. And Fort William guns are saluting in one man's honour, while the troops are firing the last volleys over the other's grave —over the grave of the brave, the gentle, the faithful Christian soldier."

William Ritchie survived Richmond Shakespear six months. A short attack of peritonitis carried him off at the height of his success as Legal Member of Council in Lord Canning's Government. In full consciousness of the approach of death he welcomed Lady Shakespear, who entered his room, and said almost exultingly, "I am dying; I am going to Richmond."

The news of my father's death reached our Paris home before we had heard of his illness. It was on the following morning that we were all assembled at morning

prayers when the door opened and a tall figure stood amongst us. It was Thackeray. He went to the armchair and took my aunt's hands and those of her sister and sat thus with them, and when we came to wish him good-bye at the time for our walking he kissed our little black gloves. He had come over immediately on hearing such tidings — unbidden, yet hardly unexpected, like a brother at need, a friend who could discern our hearts. I think it was in a later "Roundabout Paper" that he wrote: "Those who are gone you love. Those who departed loving you, love you still, and you love them always. They are not really gone, those dear hearts and true; they are only gone into the next room; and you will presently get up and follow them, and yonder door will close upon you, and you will be no more seen."

III

THACKERAY AT PALACE GREEN

THACKERAY AT PALACE GREEN

JUNE, 1862—CHRISTMAS, 1863

WHEN the summer came round and my mother had returned from India to make our home henceforth in England, we often stayed in the beautiful house in Palace Green where Mr. Thackeray was settled with his daughters from New Year, 1862. I have a very distinct impression of an unparalleled intercourse and of a quiet home atmosphere where a busy novelist possessed his soul, if not in peace in the thick of the London season, yet with some detachment. But it is only possible here to place impressions in their successive order, and if their main feature does not appear amidst the incidents that were so amusing at the time, the fault is in the narrator.

One beautiful summer's evening my sister Mrs. Freshfield and I reached the house

having crossed with a maid from Paris, and were welcomed by our beloved cousins, Anny and Minny, and there was Mr. Thackeray receiving us and laughing at our adventures, especially in the four-wheeler which had stopped at a public-house to ask its way to "Mr. Thackeray's house in Palace Green." And he was not known at that place of refreshment.

The house-warming had not long taken place, and of the humours of famous theatricals — when "Lovel the Widower" was acted by amateurs as the "Wolves and the Lamb" — I retain a few stories. Mr. Bonnington had not uttered one word of the part assigned to the author in the play-bill, but only appeared in spectacles before the fall of the curtain, to give his blessing to the company. Herman Merivale had been stage-manager. Quintin Twiss, the long-remembered A. D. C. actor of that time, had played inimitably. My cousin, Miss Bella Bayne, had been *au frais* of farce in

the play, for her devotion to Mr. Thackeray led her to take the terribly ungrateful part of Mrs. Prior, Lovel's second mother-in-law, and she carried it through with such spirit that "the little Trojan," as Mr. Thackeray named her, was the greatest success of the play. The youngest daughter of the house, Minny Thackeray, afterwards Mrs. Leslie Stephen, with a complexion of milk and roses, and sunny nineteen-year-old hair, had impersonated Lovel's deposed mother-in-law with a front, and irresistible wit. She often read bits of the play to us that summer, reproducing the dramatic Bella's crescendo of voice in the scene, when, as Mrs. Prior, she revealed to Lovel's family that his fiancée, her daughter, once danced on the boards and adorned the ballet at Drury Lane. Mrs. Leslie Stephen had a beautiful and flexible voice, most apt at reproducing comedy but low-toned in a crowd, and especially making itself felt amongst many voices, as John Addington Symonds once

pointed out to me. She had the gift of creating calm.

Another gay party given at Palace Green as a sort of furniture-warming — for the theatrical invitations had been sent for "the house of W. EMP-TY" — was a cooking-party, when the gentlemen and the ladies cooked the supper. On this occasion Mr. Thackeray made the salad in his library with the following dictum: "When you think you have put in enough oil, drop in as much more." Was it on this occasion that Mrs. Anthony Trollope was delighted when he held up his glass to her in his own house, and said, "Wife of my rival, I drink to thee!"

Very soon we were absorbed into the routine at Palace Green. It began early. Mr. Thackeray breakfasted alone, but never failed to pay his daughters a visit at breakfast, pacing the floor, having begun work an hour or two before.

After breakfast we girls had a choice

of rooms to sit in — four pleasant sitting-rooms, circled round the pretty marble-paved hall. The house within and without was redolent with eighteenth-century associations — Kensington Palace and the tall elms opposite the windows, and, ranged upon the walls within, old English looking-glasses, cabinets filled with Dresden and Chelsea china, quaint old high-backed chairs and settees, and amongst the small collection of masters, which included a Watteau and a Cuyp and a great picture of Queen Anne by De Troy, a picture of a little boy with a bird, full of fascination. He held me with a brilliant charm before knowing his history. This is the picture of Louis XVII, with the ribbon of the Order of the Saint-Esprit. It is named to-day a Greuze, painted in his early manner at the Tuileries when Marie Antoinette was keeping her mock court there. Denis Duval, who was soon to become like an inhabitant of Mr. Thackeray's house, would have told

us of his sight of the French Queen; his Memoirs were cut short; we have lost what surely would have been a very pathetic picture of Marie Antoinette when Cardinal de Rohan, who also comes into the story — already begun at Palace Green — was to be the cause of the Calumny of Europe. The picture was bought by Mr. Thackeray in a hostel in Italy in 1854. All these things exercised a spell which made us girls early devotees of the eighteenth century and its setting for narrative.

The library, where the master of the house sat at work, was of sufficient length to enable him whilst composing to walk up and down, and out of the open window into a small green garden at the back of the house.

We were quite unaware at the time of these first impressions that the architecture of the house, and the furniture within, all bore the stamp of originality in the hand of the designer and the collector. There were

of course collectors of bric-à-brac in the early sixties, but the rebuilding of London in Queen Anne architecture was wholly undreamt of, and Mr. Thackeray's house and furniture were all harmonious.

But to my narrative of the Palace Green days. It was the year of the great Exhibition of 1862. What is South Kensington Museum to-day had sprung into being with crystal domes. The afternoons were generally spent under the glass domes of the Exhibition, where the South Kensington Museum now stands. Mr. Thackeray took a great interest in modern designs and his cult of Queen Anne did not exclude purchases of modern design. A clock of pale-green Algerian marble, surmounted with a cup of ormolu, did not look out of place in his house amongst *guéridons* of the eighteenth century and blue china.

But the central interest of that great Exhibition of 1862 was in the collection of the new English school of painting. We beheld

for the first time the pictures of Hunt and Millais, and learned that they were called Pre-Raphaelites. The name had an esoteric and fascinating sound. But I must hasten to give my impression of a Pre-Raphaelite in the flesh as he stood in Mr. Thackeray's house. This was Mr. John Millais with the broad *carrure* of shoulders and stature of an English athlete, and the set of head and close curling hair of a Greek statue. He was then the hard-working young paterfamilias, not yet a Royal Academician; a contributor to the "Cornhill" of illustrations of marvellous drawing. He had a claim to close kinship with the great novelists and spoke much of their art — of Balzac's in particular. That year at South Kensington gave him place with the great poetic painters. "Ophelia" and "The Huguenot," and above all "The Vale of Rest," painted two years before the date of the South Kensington Exhibition, were assembled for the first time.

There was another of the Pre-Raphaelite

Brotherhood constantly at Palace Green, but we never knew him in this character at the time. This was Charles Allston Collins, the chosen friend, though so many years younger, of Mr. Thackeray in his later years. We only knew him as the delightful humorist, the author of "A Cruise upon Wheels," with chiselled features and searching blue eyes, who always remained grave whilst others, and especially very young people, roared at his utterances. His delicate humour appealed in a higher way to the lovers of literature. Charlie Collins, the son of Collins, R. A., — the painter of "Happy as a King," and many another English wayside, — was all his life entirely devoted to John Millais. "I love Millais as if he were dead," was his utterance, in much later years, about his brother Pre-Raphaelite of his painter days. Charles Collins had associated himself with the aims of Hunt and Millais in their first creative intensity and came in for his share of drubs from the or-

thodox critics of 1850–52. But he had given up painting for literature. Of that past phase of Millais's painting he said, "Millais threw off his pedantry like a lion." He was very much in sympathy with all Mr. Thackeray's views. He thought him a supremely good judge of a picture. But there was a penchant love for mediæval beauty which partook of his enduring friendship for Hunt, rather than of his manhood's worship for Millais and perfect sympathy with Thackeray. But all this of course one learnt later on; at that time Mr. Collins was looked upon by ourselves as the most perfect humorist, next to Mr. Thackeray, that ever existed. The "Cruise upon Wheels" best represents his delicate humour.

One more painter, Frederick Walker (hardly known yet), often in Mr. Thackeray's house in 1862 as the illustrator of "Philip" in the "Cornhill," figures by the side of Millais and Charles Collins. Shy, golden-haired, absorbed, with straight fea-

tures and earnest blue eyes, he looked astonishingly small-made by the side of gigantic Mr. Thackeray, who would open the door into the room where his daughters sat, and leave Mr. Walker standing and blushing to the roots of his hair, with the door closed behind him. (What Mr. Thackeray said before he shut the door was, "There, Walker, are a lot of pretty girls for you.")

The art of drawing on wood blocks was a new art at the time. Thackeray, Millais, and Walker were all engaged on it. How eagerly we looked for the initial drawings which head the chapters in the "Cornhill" of March, April, May, and June, of 1863 — illustrations of "Denis Duval"!

IV

LAST MONTHS

LAST MONTHS

1863

WHEN my sister and I returned for our summer visit at Palace Green in 1863, Mr. Thackeray was at work upon his novel of "Denis Duval," and in the full vein of historical romance. The finished story was to have left a perfect picture of a British Admiral of the eighteenth century — for such was Denis, who wrote his Memoirs at the age of seventy, and described Rye at Winchelsea in all the ferment of George III's declaration of war against France during the revolt of our colonies in America.

Denis was a fascinating boy as we first made his acquaintance at Palace Green. I think he pervaded it for us that summer. There was another hand of consummate art at work on the creation. This was Frederick

Walker. His drawing of Denis, entitled "Denis's Valet," with his vigorous Amazon Alsatian mother, was exhibited afterwards as a water-colour; with one other illustration of the splendid romance. These delicate eighteenth-century images with which one fell in love in the next months are all mixed up with my souvenirs of very solid work and preparation for a novel which was, alas! to remain a fragment, but one which gives evidence of the genius which inspired all Mr. Thackeray's last months.

Mr. Thackeray's morning visit to his daughters' breakfast-table almost invariably brought news of the coming story for the "Cornhill Magazine." How thrilling that story became when we discovered the thread of the story of "Denis Duval" may be judged by the details about which our girl breakfast-table was consulted.

What did babies wear? They wore shoes — and Count de Saverne, when he fell in the duel with De la Motte, wore his child's

shoe tied round his neck, hidden within his shirt. "But," Mr. Thackeray continued, "Hugo has got a shoe. In 'Notre Dame de Paris' there is a *magnificent* shoe! What can we have in place of a shoe?"

A cap, a bib, a sock was suggested. It was Mr. Collins who said: "There is an inherent pathos in clothes: you can't beat an old greatcoat for pathetic sentiment." But it was found that nothing could beat a shoe, which already plays a large part in Hugo's story of Esmeralda, and the incident does not appear in the text.

We came to know about the little girl who wore the shoe in "Denis Duval." Charles Dickens wrote in his criticism: "There are two children in it, touched with a hand as loving and tender as ever father caressed his little child with." He was thinking of the scene where the boy Denis rescues the poor, mad countess's child, left cradled on a rock on the seashore, as the tide came up, by the mother,

who has wandered away in the night from the sheltering of Madame Duval.

Agnes de Saverne afterwards became the British Admiral's lady. In her poor mother, Countess de Saverne's, troubles we took a deep interest. Mr. Thackeray came into the room one day where we were sitting with his daughters, with a very tragic look.

"The Countess is growing very mad. St. Sebastian has just appeared to her struck all over with arrows looking like a *fricandeau.*"

In the story as it stands St. Sebastian and St. Agnes appear to her, but the grotesque image which first presented itself to Mr. Thackeray is left out. He was looking far ahead in the story when the band of smugglers, who met at Duval the Barber's shop, were to come into the naval campaign under Paul. Mr. Thackeray was still looking for the names of his Dramatis Personæ, and as we drove out in the July afternoons with him he read every name over the shop windows

that was in any way singular and suggestive.

These drives were towards Richmond or Wimbledon in the garden-party season. The carriage would come to the door and we half children were packed into it, and there we waited with our cousins, quite ready for the Garden Party, and not moving till sometimes an hour had passed and Mr. Thackeray appeared. His daughters were delighted as we waited. They said, "Papa is getting on with his story." Mr. Thackeray did not break off easily when he was in the vein. And yet how neat and methodical was the page that he left behind him, covered with those paragraphs of close writing that to this day form a picture. There was hardly an erasure, but at times the page did not get covered at all.

He was always in splendid spirits when we got off, and then what a warm welcome awaited him, as I particularly remember, at Mrs. Prescott's house. The name of it has been changed, but it still stands in the over-

shadowed lane that lies between Barnes Common and Richmond Park. The lawn, from which the slopes of Richmond Park could be seen in vistas, was the meeting-place of great literary friends — Tennyson, the Duff Gordons, and others.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Collins were almost part of the home circle. She, Dickens's youngest daughter, so long known as Mrs. Perugini, the lifelong friend of Lady Ritchie, was then the close friend of Minny Thackeray, Mrs. Leslie Stephen. Charles Allston Collins was at the time "Sir David." He went by the name of "Jacques" with Leighton and Mrs. Sartoris, who were devoted to him, but at Palace Green he was oftener called "Colenso" — a name so in contrast with his wise grave eyes and fastidious sensitiveness as to amuse us deeply.

There was so much affinity between the mind of Mr. Thackeray and Charles Collins, the far younger man, and they were so constantly together in the last months, that

I seem to be able to sum up my impressions of Mr. Thackeray's views and philosophy of life, by comparing them with those of the younger man.

Both were imbued in the highest degree with the romance and poetic adventure of life, but both had tasted deeply of its struggle, also of the mediocrity of men. Nature had gifted them both with talents of humorous delineation, in Mr. Thackeray's case of consummate satire. But both had attained that perfect discrimination which made them often more tolerant than smaller men.

Charles Collins, who lost his health, and bore great suffering with resignation and spirit, never let illness divide him from his friends, young or old, grave or gay. Mr. Thackeray, with far more physical strength, higher spirits, and a gift of burlesque fancy which made humanity more grotesque to him than to the sense of most, yet deserved that epitaph which Charles Collins often

pointed out in the poem of Leigh Hunt as the finest a man could attain to : —

> Write me as one that loved his fellow men.

Our last visit to Palace Green was in the autumn of 1863.

These early impressions became memories full of stimulus and comfort when Mr. Thackeray passed away suddenly in full vigour in the dawn of Christmas Eve, 1863. The news reached us in the Dorsetshire Manor House which was now our home in England. He had followed the cousins who had been like brothers to him in devotion, at the age of fifty-two, and, as it seemed to us, without a day's illness. On his last birthday, Charlotte Ritchie, the faithful friend of his former anxious years, had congratulated him on the promise he gave of long life. "You have passed *la cinquantaine*, William, — a good omen in our short-lived family." But it was said on his *last* visit to Paris and to

the pleasant salon of the Boulevard Malesherbes. It was there that I heard from the lips of Sir Theodore Martin the grave comment upon Thackeray's death which has remained with me ever since: —

"It was a great loss to literature, because Thackeray had struck a new vein in Historical Romance and the mine was not exhausted. But," continued Sir Theodore, "Thackeray's death had wider issues. They lie in the loss to English literature of a high tone and standard which have had inestimable influence upon it, the influence of a perfect English gentleman."

FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES
PRINTED AT
THE RIVERSIDE PRESS, CAMBRIDGE
IN THE MONTH OF JULY, MDCCCCXI
AND PUBLISHED BY
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK
NUMBER 519

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